

PARK, RECREATION AND COMMUNITY SERVICES BOARD MINUTES

THURSDAY, December 10, 2009

A regular meeting of the Park, Recreation and Community Services Board was held in the Council Chambers in City Hall of Burbank 275 East Olive Avenue, Burbank, California. The meeting was called to order at 6:08 pm by Whit Prouty, Chairperson.

ROLL CALL

Present Members Prouty, DePalo, Layfer, Yegparian and Ferguson **Absent...** None
Staff Present... Director Chris Daste, Deputy Directors Teri Stein, Jan Bartolo, Marisa Garcia and Gaby Flores; Administrative Officer Johnathan Frank, Acting Recording Secretary Erick Solis

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes approved for December (passed 4-0 with one addition and one abstention)

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The pledge of allegiance was recited

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

None

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Steven Beardsley spoke on the BAF Board selection process.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Upcoming events were announced

NEW BUSINESS

1. BAF Board Selection Process- Step 2

Ms. Garcia reported that the Burbank Athletic Federation (BAF) is comprised of seven members who hold three-year terms. Upcoming appointments are split into two staggered terms: two vacancies in 2012 and three vacancies in 2013. Vacancies are open for thirty days, notification is sent to all BAF members, an ad is placed in The Leader, and the selection process includes an application, interview and final appointment by the Park, Recreation and Community Services Board (PRCSB). It was the PRCSB's desire to establish a four person ad-hoc committee consisting of two PRCS Boardmembers and two BAF Boardmembers to facilitate the process. The Committee would be charged with interviewing candidates and making recommendations, then forwarding the rankings to the PRCSB for final appointment. The process would be implemented in January 2010. As discussed at the November PRCSB meeting, staff approached the BAF and asked them to summarize their recommendations based on the PRCSB's direction to staff. The BAF was in agreement that there should be an interview panel, which would include two PRCSB members. However, one modification included a request to include all BAF Boardmembers (who were not up for reappointment) on the ad-hoc committee instead of just two as recommended by PRCSB. This would mean that there could be anywhere between four to five BAF Boardmembers on the committee. The BAF was in agreement that the recommendations go to PRCSB for final appointment. The other slight modification to the PRCSB's recommendation was to allow the option of a current Boardmember to extend their appointment for up to two additional terms. The BAF was in agreement that the process should go into effect as of January 2010.

The Boardmembers voiced their individual opinions and heard comments from Mr. Scott, Mr. Beardsley, and Ms. Ludwig. After an extensive discussion, the Boardmembers decided to move forward as of January 1, 2010, with changing the BAF application process to include an ad-hoc interview panel consisting of two PRCS Boardmembers and three BAF Boardmembers (not up for re-appointment). This panel would be charged with making recommendations to the PRCS Board (for their final appointment) through a ranking process containing anonymous individual scores for each applicant as well as an average score. Terms for the members would be staggered 2-2-3 starting January 1, 2010.

ACTION Motion made by Mr. Ferguson to change the BAF application process to include an ad-hoc interview panel consisting of two PRCS Boardmembers and three BAF Boardmembers (not up for re-appointment); panel would be charged with making recommendations to the PRCS Board (for their final appointment) through a ranking process containing anonymous individual scores for each applicant as well as an average score; terms for the members would be staggered 2-2-3 starting January 1, 2010. Seconded by Mr. Layfer and passed 5-0.

2. T-Mobile Wireless Antenna

Ms. Bartolo reported that T-Mobile had contacted staff regarding the possibility of installing a wireless antenna at Brace Park. A meeting was set with Burbank Water and Power (BWP), park staff and representatives from T-Mobile. Once on-site, it was determined that the location selected was on BWP property near the ballfield area. Michael Thompson, Principal Civil Engineer from

BWP, reported that T-Mobile had selected an area behind a park fence within the BWP operational area (designated as Reservoir 5). The site proposed would include an equipment enclosure with a large block wall and a 35' moni-pole disguised as a pump. The surrounding area contains many pine trees that are 35-40' tall. Mr. Thompson noted that Federal regulations prohibit denying a cellular site based on health effects from radio frequency. He added that two days ago, City Council and the Planning Board had a study session to discuss the issue of cellular sites and they directed staff to bring back additional information for consideration. They would have further discussions regarding the existing ordinance in place relating to cellular facilities, which was written in 1996, and would discuss revising it to incorporate stronger language relating to location of cellular facilities. BWP has not made a final decision but will be doing so within the next few weeks. Ms. Bartolo added that she had received an email from cellular service representatives who were potentially entertaining the idea of moving the suggested cell tower site off of the BWP land and onto the actual park area. The park, which is approximately 20 acres in size, includes some BWP property and open park space encroaches onto the hills towards Crest Ridge.

In response to a request to expand on potential changes in the ordinance, Mr. Thompson explained that City Council would have further discussions to decide how to change the current ordinance but were not specific as to which portions they wanted to change. Generally, the ordinance in other areas relates to visual impacts and stay away from health effects. Mr. Yegparian noted that the towers are aesthetically displeasing but had nothing else to say if he was prohibited from considering health affects (except that the law ought to be changed). Mr. Thompson shared that some City Councils have put forward letters to the Federal government. Mr. Ferguson reported that he had attended the community meeting briefly last month and was concerned because even BWP property belonged to the taxpayers. He was not in favor of any land being sold off to create a partnership that adversely affects any neighborhood. If there is any impact whatsoever, he was not in favor of it. Mr. Yegparian felt that regardless of where the tower was placed, the Department/Board should be notified and asked for input due to the potential impact on the park. He suggested that a letter be sent to our Congressman suggesting that the health issue be revisited, and also suggested that another letter be sent directly by City Council. The Board concurred. Mr. Layfer felt that the health and welfare of the community was top priority and suggested that Mr. Yegparian and Mr. Ferguson take the lead with staff's assistance to draft a letter. Mr. Ferguson felt that the Federal piece should be left to City Council but was interested in the Board requesting a change in zoning standards to define how far away from the park these facilities could be located. Mr. Yegparian suggested that City Council send a letter as well. Mr. DePalo agreed that the Board should ask City Council to take action and noted that although aesthetically displeasing, he was more concerned over the health effects of the towers. Mr. Daste would do a Step 1 process and bring to back to City Council that it was the Board's recommendation that Council send a letter to our congressional representatives. Ms. Garcia suggested that a letter summarizing the Board's recommendations for Council be brought back to the January or February meeting. Mr. Ferguson wanted to include something specific in the letter regarding the standard for development be a certain amount of feet away from park property or land immediately adjacent to park property. Ms. Bartolo noted that the issue was re-agendized for Council discussion and suggested the possibility of waiting until after Council had had time to review the information to present their recommendations. Mr. Yegparian felt it was important to say something as soon as possible in order for their input to be incorporated into any changes. Mr. Daste would let the Board know when the item was placed on the agenda. The Board agreed that zoning standard changes should be incorporated into the letter as well.

ACTION Ask City Council to send a letter addressing the legislative issue with the Park, Recreation and Community Services Board's recommendations and address setting a standard for development regarding the specific location of cell towers on or near park property.

3. Landfill Parcel Discussion

Ms. Bartolo explained that in the early 1990's, a Hillside Masterplan Taskforce was created consisting of Park Board members, City staff, community members, a park planning consultant, and an EIR consultant. Several new ideas were suggested and discussed including adding additional ballfields, a land strip for model airplanes, a location for a tennis center, a hotel, volleyball courts, basketball courts, additional ballfields, picnic areas, soccer fields and parking lots. Nearby residents opposed development claiming that any type of new attraction would bring unwanted noise and traffic to the neighborhood. Design options were scaled down to include a more passive development; however, there were environmental impact concerns regarding ingress and egress, and adverse impacts to the residential neighborhood as well as to the hillside environment. Currently, the landfill parcel portion of land is considered closed and capped, which is very significant to regulatory agencies. Any changes in this status would require going through several regulatory agencies to change permits and a very lengthy process. Restrictions are great and would potentially limit the use of installing lights, restrooms or any type of structure. Grading could cause potential problems or not be allowed at all. Burbank Water and Power and Public Works both use the site for storage and training purposes and development would impact these. A feasibility study would have to be entertained to consider any possibilities for development. Development was also cost prohibitive and it was determined that it was not a feasible option, at which point the task force was disbanded.

Mr. Yegparian felt that the area lends itself to a more passive use facility. It was his recommendation to reopen the matter and concentrate on a park oriented towards pedestrian and bike access primarily to lessen any traffic impacts on the neighborhood. He mentioned an idea suggested at a trails meeting to create a bicycle park (which would require minimal grading) as a long-term possibility since the expense may not be feasible at this time. Ms. Bartolo explained that the first step would be to have an internal dialogue with the Public Works Department and staff since they are primarily responsible for the landfill. Ms. Bartolo reiterated staff's concerns with the area being "capped", and the lack of parking, potential methane gas and the impossibility of lighting. Mr. Daste

reported that although discussions are in the preliminary stages, he is working with BWP on Reservoir #3 (Palm Ballfield), which is being rebuilt and may present open space opportunities in that area as well. Mr. Daste stated that he would discuss the issue with Public Works to get their reaction. The item could then be placed on a priority list (along with other projects such as Verdugo, McCambridge and the campground) and the costs associated with it would be determined. Mr. Yegparian noted that he had explored the landfill area and he pointed out that storage needs could certainly be relocated. Mr. Prouty thought it was a wonderful idea but felt the project needed to be prioritized (especially with the current financial crisis). Upon an inquiry from Mr. DePalo, Ms. Bartolo clarified that the Reservoir #3 area that Mr. Daste had referred to was the periphery area that is cordoned off (BWP property) at Palm Ballfield and there may be future thoughts of possible development. Mr. DePalo was in favor of any open space in Burbank.

ACTION Note and File

4. Outside Arborists Trimming City-Owned Trees

Ms. Bartolo reported that at a February City Council meeting, Councilmembers directed staff to research the procedures of other municipalities and determine the feasibility of outside arborists trimming city-owned trees. Staff contacted ten municipalities, including Fullerton, Glendale, Long Beach, Los Angeles, Monrovia, Pasadena, San Marino, Santa Barbara, Santa Clarita, and Santa Monica. On June 9, staff informed City Council that all ten cities currently had programs that did allow outside arborists to prune city-owned trees and provided them with an overview on how each municipality administers their program. On November 3, staff provided additional information on the feasibility and recommended to perhaps create a policy modeling the City of Pasadena's. Pasadena allows the homeowner to obtain bids from outside contractors if they have the appropriate licenses and insurance. The owner provides the City with a check for the amount that will compensate the contractor for his services and the City issues a permit to the outside arborist/contractor. The City technically hires the contractor so that their work can be monitored by the City. Once completed, the City will release the check to the contractor. City Council requested that staff bring back more information on additional fees charged by the cities and asked for clarification on the number of requests. The City performs these services at no charge, however, there is a back log and at times residents are impatient. Staff is not sure at this point how many of these residents would be willing to pay out of pocket knowing that the service will eventually be performed at no charge by the City. Staff also proposed a tentative fee structure to offset the cost for the Forestry Services Manager to meet with the homeowner and obtain all documents from the contractor, observe work and authorize payments to the contractor. There are also fees for Public Works associated with lane closures and street use permits. City Council asked staff to fine tune the fee structure and to meet with the City Attorney's Office regarding liability issues and the modification to the Municipal Ordinance to accommodate the establishment of this new program. Staff anticipates returning to City Council with this follow-up in February 2010.

In response to Boardmembers inquiries, Ms. Bartolo clarified that upon calling to request a trim or prune, the homeowner is given an approximate time of wait for services (which varies seasonally between a few months and a year) if the order is not deemed an emergency by staff (who inspect all requests within 72 hours). Staff will oftentimes meet with the homeowner to address concerns and as a follow-up to the assessment. Because the City has over 30,000 trees and staff does not anticipate an overabundance of residents partaking in this service option, regular staffing should not be affected by this service. The regular trim cycle is 5 years; however, the department receives approximately 1,600 specific homeowner requests annually. Typically, staff does some sort of work on every one of the requests received. In response to a Boardmember comment that the resident concern for immediacy seems more aesthetic, Mr. Daste noted that he was extremely sensitive to accusations that there were safety issues with the trees that were not being addressed (which were incorrect). He agreed that the urgency most times seems aesthetically driven and that perspectives vary. Boardmembers commented on their perspectives. It was the general consensus that current needs did not warrant outside arborists services for safety reasons (the urgency seemed aesthetic).

ACTION

OLD BUSINESS

1. Aquatics Steering Committee

Ms. Garcia reported that the Professional Services Agreement for architectural services for the aquatic facility at Verdugo Pool was going to City Council on December 15 for approval. The Architect will begin work in January and it will be an 18 month process. It is anticipated that the new facility will be opened in the fall of 2011. The Board agreed to remove the item from Old Business to Reports and receive updates as appropriate.

In response to a suggestion by a Boardmember, the Public Works Department would be contacted regarding the tractors on California Street, which are blocking traffic and could be a safety concern.

ACTION Note and File

2. City Council Agenda Items

Mr. Daste reported on the following City Council items: Approval for Verdugo project design services agreement (December 15); amendment to Five points Art project agreement (January 5); Approval to execute a PSA for the third installation of art along Chandler Bikeway (January 5).

ACTION Note and File

REPORTS

None

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS FROM AUDIENCE

None

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS FROM BOARD AND STAFF

Mr. Ferguson requested a future update on the Department’s childcare and daycare programs, an update on Ovrom Park programs and activities, and continued updates from the other Boards and Committees.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:03 pm.

CHAIR: _____ **Date:** _____

SECRETARY: _____ **Date:** _____